the people of Boston from a platform in Boston Garden. President Eisenhower, Horace Taft, Mayor James Curley, Gov. Thomas Dewey, and Winston Churchill are just a few who have contributed to the Garden's political lore.

I could stand here and talk for days on the meaning of the Boston Garden and the tumultuous history it has enjoyed. I could recall the many games I have attended and rallies I have witnessed. There are many things worth mentioning, but I am certain I would be unable to recall them all.

Tonight, in Boston, the people will re-live all of these and other memories in a ceremony full of history and celebration designed to mark the closing of one of the greatest venues in America. ''Havlicek stole the ball * * *, ''Sanderson to Orr * * *, ''Bird for three * * *, ''Penalty—O'Reilly, ''Russell with a block, ''Esposito shoots, scores! ''DJ steals, over to Bird, Good!, ''Cheevers stones him, ''Cousy tricky dribbles, lays it in.'' The voices of the past catalogue the great moments in a history soon to be turned over to a new building and a new era of sports in Boston.

As the lights dim for the final time, echoes will resound through the city and people will think of their fondest memories of the Garden and celebrate the great times enjoyed by those who were there, or watching, or listening, when great things happened.

THE CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS REVIEW CONFERENCE: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S. LEADERSHIP

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, this week representatives of over 50 governments began meeting in Vienna, Austria to discuss proposals to amend the Conventional Weapons Convention, which contains the first laws of war limitations on the use of landmines.

Fifteen years ago, the United States played a leading role in negotiations on the Convention. However, despite lofty rhetoric at the time, the Convention is so riddled with loopholes and exceptions, as well as lacking any verification procedures, that the numbers of civilian casualties from landmines has soared. This is because the focus of the negotiations then was on reducing the dangers to military personnel, rather than on the problems landmines cause for civilians.

Today, there are 80 to 110 million landmines in over 60 countries, each one waiting to explode from the pressure of a footstep.

These hidden killers have turned vast areas of land, in countries struggling to rebuild after years of war, into death traps. According to the State Department every 22 minutes someone is maimed or killed by a landmine. That is 26,000 people each year, most of whom are innocent civilians.

It would cost tens of billions of dollars to locate and remove the mines. It is an incredibly arduous, dangerous, and prohibitively expensive task. There is no way they will be cleared. The world's arsenals are overflowing with new mines that are only compounding the problem in every armed conflict today.

Mr. President, the meetings in Vienna began yesterday with dramatic announcements by two of our NATO allies, France and Austria. The French Government announced that it would halt all production of antipersonnel landmines, and begin destroying their stockpiles of these weapons. The Austrian Government declared that its military would renounce their use, and destroy their stockpiles.

Earlier this year, Belgium outlawed all production, use and exports of antipersonnel mines.

I mention this because just a month ago, my amendment to impose a 1-year moratorium on the use of these weapons passed the Senate 67 to 27.

Yesterday's announcements by our NATO allies go even further, and the United States should seize this opportunity to support them. These NATO countries defy the Pentagon's assertion that modern militaries like ours require antipersonnel landmines. Landmines are a coward's weapon, that are overwhelmingly used against civilians. If the United States were to join France, Belgium and Austria it would give an enormous push toward the goal of ridding the world of these weapons.

Mr. President, I am going to put my full statement in the RECORD, but I do want to say this. This conference in Vienna presents the United States with a tremendous opportunity, an opportunity that must not be missed.

Fifteen years ago the Conventional Weapons Convention was signed with much fanfare, but it has turned out to be worth little more than the paper it was printed on. Today, there are hundreds of thousands of people dead or maimed by landmines, the very weapon that Convention was intended to control.

We have seen the immense devastation landmines cause, and continue to cause, around the world. Each day, another 70 people are killed or horribly mutilated. The undeniable truth is that antipersonnel landmines cannot be controlled. They are too cheap to make, too easy to transport and conceal. They are the ''Saturday night specials'' of civil wars, and they have become one of the world's greatest scourges.

Last September at the United Nations, President Clinton took a courageous step, when he called for the eventual elimination of antipersonnel mines. My amendment was a small step toward that goal.

Its purpose was not unilateral disarmament, as some in the Pentagon would have one believe, but leadership. Leadership by the world's only superpower with a military arsenal that dwarfs that of any other nation, to stop the senseless slaughter of tens of thousands of innocent people. By setting an example, we can lead others to take similar action, just as our European allies announced steps yesterday that we should imitate.

The amendment that won the bipartisan support of two thirds of the Senate should be a model for our negotiators in Vienna. I only wish these negotiations were being held in Cambodia, or Angola, where the one-legged victims of landmines can be seen on every street corner.

I wish the negotiators could experience the constant fear of losing a leg, or an arm, or a child, simply from stepping in the wrong place. Instead of weeks of lofty speeches in air conditioned room quibbling over an elaborate set of unenforceable rules, I think we would see dramatic progress toward a ban on these weapons.

Let us not repeat the mistake of a decade and a half ago. Let us finally recognize that there are some weapons that are so indiscriminate, so inhumane, and so impossible to control, that they should be banned altogether. Let us finally do what we say, and stop this when we have the chance.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a New York Times article about the French Government's announcement.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows;

[From the New York Times Sept. 27, 1995

PARIS TO SCRAP SOME LAND MINES IN FACE OF GROWING SENTIMENT

VIENNA, Sept. 26.—France announced today that it would stop production and export of all antipersonnel mines and begin to destroy its stocks.

Xavier Emmanuelli, the French secretary of state for emergency humanitarian actions, said at a conference in Vienna that France was determined to carry on its struggle against mines, which caused a ''humanitarian catastrophe.''

''To further this end, France has decided to adopt a moratorium on the production of all types of antipersonnel mines,'' Mr. Emmanuelli told delegates. ''We shall also halt the production of these weapons.''

Furthermore, he added, ''France will as of now begin to reduce its stocks of antipersonnel mines by destroying them.''

The Vienna conference is reviewing a 1980 convention on weapons that are deemed to be indiscriminate or excessively injurious. It will also be discussing laser weapons that blind people exposed to them.

The United Nations Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, called for a total ban on land mines, which he said killed or maimed thousands of civilians each year.

He acknowledged that the conference was unlikely to outlaw land mines completely but urged participating countries to at least establish an export moratorium.

In a videotaped message, the United Nations chief said 1,600 people would be killed or wounded in mine blasts around the world during the time the conference was being held. It ends Oct. 13.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali said several countries had already heeded a call by the General Assembly to establish an export moratorium and he urged the conference to back an export ban to states that had not yet ratified the 1980 convention.

France's move, which does not cover antitank mines, is likely to increase pressure on countries that are still exporting mines.

The United States banned mine exports three years ago.

Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Sweden backed Mr. Boutros-Ghali's call for a total ban.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, landmines have been around since at least the American Civil War, when live artillery shells were concealed beneath the surface of roads, in houses, even in water wells. They would explode when a person inadvertently came into contact with them, whether a soldier or an innocent child. The result was an arm or leg blown off, or worse. At the time, General Sherman, who is not remembered as a great humanitarian, called them a ''violation of civilized warfare.'' Yet despite Sherman's condemnation, landmines have been used ever since, in steadily increasing numbers.

My own knowledge about landmines dates to 1988, when I met a young boy in a field hospital on the Honduras-Nicaragua border. He had lost a leg from a mine that had been left on a jungle path near his home. It was because of that boy that I started a fund to get artificial limbs to landmine victims around the world. The war victims fund has been used in over a dozen countries, including Vietnam.

That boy is one of countless people whose lives have been irreparably harmed by landmines. We have all seen the photographs of children with their legs blown off at the knee; their mothers with an arm or a leg missing; hospital wards filled with rows of amputees. They tell the gruesome story, yet those people, who face a lifetime of hardship, are the lucky ones because they survived. There are many thousands of people like them, and as many others who died from loss of blood before reaching a hospital.

Civilians are not the only victims of landmines. Landmines have become a cheap, popular weapon in developing countries where American troops are likely to be sent in the future, either in combat or on peacekeeping missions. A $2 plastic antipersonnel mine, hidden under a layer of sand or dust and practically impossible to detect with a metal detector, can blow the leg off the best trained, best equipped American soldier as easily as a defenseless child. If American and NATO troops are sent to former Yugoslavia to rescue U.N. peacekeepers, they will face as many as 2 million mines in Bosnia alone.

The social and economic costs of landmines are staggering. The United Nation estimates that it will cost several tens of billions of dollars just to remove the existing mines. In each of the past 2 years, about 100,000 mines were cleared at an average cost of several hundred dollars per mine, while an estimated 2 to 2.5 million new mines are laid. The United States has spent millions of dollars to develop better technology for locating and removing landmines, but the most effective method is still a hand-held probe and metal detector. Kuwait, one of the few mine-infested countries rich enough to get rid of the mines left over from the Gulf war, spent over $800 million to clear the millions of Iraqi and American mines and 84 deminers died in the process. We are clearly losing the battle.

The cost of caring for the victims is also immense. The medical care, artificial limbs and lost income for a quarter million amputees over a lifetime is figured at about $750 million, and another 70 people are maimed or killed by mines each day.

Three years ago almost no one was paying attention to this global crisis. The Conventional Weapons Convention had become a distant memory, in part because it had been such a failure. Then, in 1992, the U.S. Senate passed my amendment for a moratorium on the export of antipersonnel landmines. That amendment had one goal—to challenge other countries to join with us to stop the spread of these hidden killers.

Since then, and spurred on by a global campaign of 350 nongovernmental organizations in at least 30 countries, public pressure against the proliferation and use of antipersonnel mines has grown steadily. To date, 28 countries have halted all or most of their exports of these weapons.

Then last September, in an historic speech to the U.N. General Assembly, President Clinton announced the goal of the eventual elimination of antipersonnel mines. On December 15, the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution calling for further steps toward this goal.

This is the first time since the banning of chemical weapons that the nations of the world have singled out a type of weapon for total elimination. It reflects a growing consensus that antipersonnel landmines are so cheap, so easy to mass produce, so easy to conceal and transport and sow by the thousands, that they cannot be controlled. They have become slow motion weapons of mass destruction, and it is civilians who suffer.

In March of this year, Belgium, a member of NATO, became the first country to unilaterally implement the U.N. goal, by prohibiting the production, export, and use of antipersonnel mines. In June, the Norwegian Parliament did the same thing, and half a dozen other countries have declared support for a global ban on these weapons. The European Parliament and the Organization of African Unity have also adopted resolutions supporting a complete ban.

U.N. Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata, Pope John Paul II, former President Jimmy Carter, former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, and American Red Cross President Elizabeth Dole are among the world leaders who have called for an end to the use of antipersonnel mines.

Yet, despite this progress, the use of landmines continues unabated. In the past year alone, an estimated 5 to 10 million new mines were produced and millions have been used in Chechnya, Bosnia, Cambodia, along the Peruvian-Ecuador border, and in virtually every other armed conflict in the world today.

President Clinton's announcement of the goal to seek the eventual elimination of antipersonnel mines was a crucial milestone, because it defined the ultimate solution to the problem. The administration has also participated actively in the meetings to prepare for the Vienna review conference, where it has shown leadership on several important issues such as the convention's scope and verification. It has also been the leading contributor to landmine clearance programs in countries contaminated with mines.

On the other hand, the administration has emphasized eventual rather than elimination. It has proposed a strategy, developed by the Pentagon, which aims to promote the export and use of self-destruct mines which are designed to blow themselves up after a finite period of time. The theory is that by increasing the availability of these safe mines, the reliance on long-life mines, which often remain active years after a conflict ends, will decrease. However, there is no requirement that governments actually reduce their stockpiles of long-life mines, and no limit on the number of self-destruct mines than can be used.

In an ideal world this approach might make sense, but the reality is otherwise. It ignores the intrinsic problem with landmines—no matter how modern the technology, as long as they are active they cannot distinguish between civilians and soldiers. It also ignores the fact that these mines can be scattered over wide areas by the thousands, or tens of thousands, and even if the failure rate is 2 or 3 percent they pose a perpetual life-threatening danger to whole societies. Moreover, there are tens of millions of long-life mines in inventories around the world. There is little incentive for governments to destroy these stockpiles simply to pay to replace them with more expensive short-life mines. Finally, if we treat some mines as acceptable it will be difficult if not impossible to build international support for the goal of banning them altogether. The inevitable result will be many more needless civilian deaths.

My amendment, which passed the Senate on August 4, offers an alternative approach. But whether the opportunity of the Vienna conference will be seized is the question, and I am not optimistic. Despite notable progress on some issues, the four meetings to prepare for the conference were disappointing since there was little support for a complete ban on antipersonnel mines. Instead, it seems clear that, at best, we can expect an increasingly elaborate set of rules and procedures which are exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to monitor and enforce.

Although probable, such an outcome is not inevitable. To begin with, there is a proposal for consideration at the review conference to prohibit the use, development, manufacture, stockpiling, or transfer of antipersonnel landmines. The administration should support this proposal, especially considering this week's announcements by the French and Austrian Governments, coming on the heels of the Belgian Government's. It is fully consistent with the President's goal, and with my amendment. Even a halt to production, as our NATO allies have done, would be a major step beyond where we are.

Unfortunately, the Pentagon continues to insist that it needs antipersonnel landmines until viable and humane alternatives are developed, and is therefore certain to reject such an approach despite the administration's own rhetoric. Although the Pentagon is spending millions of dollars to develop more advanced mines, there is little evidence that it is seriously engaged in developing alternatives. Instead, the administration will probably support proposed hortatory language that the restrictions and prohibitions in this protocol shall facilitate the ultimate goal of a complete ban on the production, stockpiling, use, and trade of antipersonnel landmines. Although constructive, this language would have no operative effect and could easily be construed to be consistent with the administration's safe mine approach.

Even if governments fail to adopt the complete ban on antipersonnel mines which I and many others would prefer, the conference can produce important progress toward that goal and the United States should seek the strongest possible limits on antipersonnel landmines.

The convention, like other laws of war agreements, contains limits on use, as opposed to production, stockpiles, and transfers. My amendment, which also limits use, offers a useful model, and the administration should incorporate elements of it into the U.S. negotiating position. Rather than encourage the widespread use of self-destruct mines, my amendment seeks to severely limit the use of all antipersonnel mines, and thus move unambiguously toward a complete ban. But it falls significantly short of a ban, since it permits their use along international borders and in demilitarized zones which is a paramount concern of countries with hostile neighbors. It exempts antitank mines. It exempts command detonated munitions which are effective for protecting a perimeter and are not indiscriminate. And, it does not take effect for 3 years.

Although my amendment differs substantially from the administration's current policy, it has the distinct benefit of being simpler to implement and far easier to verify. And while overcoming the considerable resistance to such a significant change in international practice would depend on the amount of public pressure that could be amassed to convince governments to agree, it has the added advantage that it might actually work.

While I believe the above recommendations are reasonable and necessary under the circumstances, I fully recognize that, at best, they are likely to receive only passing consideration. However, short of that, there are several other areas of discussion where strong U.S. leadership could determine whether the review conference achieves meaningful results.

I am encouraged that there is near agreement on expanding the scope of the convention beyond international conflicts. This is crucial, since the widespread use of landmines in recent years has been in civil wars. The administration has strongly supported this modification, and it should advocate for final agreement on application of the convention in all circumstances, so there is no ambiguity about its universal application.

There is a proposal that any antipersonnel mine that is not placed in a marked and guarded minefield must contain a self-destructing device. However, self-destruct mines are often disbursed by aircraft and artillery in huge numbers over wide areas making it extremely difficult to accurately map their location. Instead, all mines, including self-destruct mines which as noted above are as indiscriminate as other mines, should be required to be located in marked and monitored minefields to ensure the exclusion of civilians. In addition, given the large number of self-destruct mines that failed to self-destruct in the Persian Gulf war, it is essential that the United States advocate strongly that such mines also contain a self-deactivating device, such as a battery which loses power after a finite time.

A proposal tabled by Russia would establish an exception to the self-destruct and marked and monitored minefield requirements in situations where direct enemy military action makes it impossible to comply. Such an exception would virtually negate the effect of these requirements, and the administration should strongly oppose it.

The time period within which a self-destruct mine must self-destruct or self-deactivate remains a subject of discussion. There are proposals ranging from 2 to 365 days. Indeed, at least one government has reportedly proposed that there be no time limit. Most U.S. mines are designed to self-destruct within 24 to 48 hours, and to self-deactivate within 60 days. The administration should advocate strongly for this short time period.

One of the most frequent criticisms of the Conventional Weapons Convention is its lack of verification and compliance procedures. The administration has proposed factfinding and compliance procedures which, while not nearly as intrusive as the verification and compliance procedures in the Chemical Weapons Convention, could significantly enhance the effectiveness of the Conventional Weapons Convention. In contrast, a proposal advocated by several nonaligned governments would provide for only transparency requirements, whereby governments would have to disclose certain information about their use of mines. This would be woefully inadequate. If the review conference is to have any hope of producing meaningful results the convention must include effective verification procedures and at least the possibility of sanctions for nonratification and noncompliance.

It is encouraging that there appears to be agreement that antipersonnel mines must be detectable with common electronic metal detecting equipment. To avoid confusion and foreseeable problems, there needs to be a requirement of a specific amount of metal to ensure easy detection. This requirement should be extended to cover antitank mines as well. This is very important for the safety of deminers.

The administration has proposed to prohibit antihandling devices on antitank landmines, as well as on antipersonnel mines. Unfortunately, this has not received support from other countries. The administration should continue to advocate for such a prohibition, since an antitank mine with an anti-handling device is an antipersonnel mine. This could also could help reduce the danger to deminers.

Finally, given the U.N. General Assembly's adoption of the goal of eventually eliminating antipersonnel mines, the utter failure of the convention, and the fact that the results of the Vienna conference are likely to be quite modest, the administration should seek frequent reviews of the convention. Rather than every 10 years, there should be some form of annual technical review, and a formal review at least every 5 years. In addition to identifying problems, frequent reviews could help bring additional States on board.

Like any weapon, landmines have a military use. But it needs to be weighed against the immense, long-term human and economic damage they cause. Solving the landmine crisis will take years, possibly generations. The Vienna conference is a beginning. Our aim should be to build an international consensus that like chemical and biological weapons, antipersonnel mines are so indiscriminate and inhumane that they do not belong on this Earth. They are not weapons we depend on for our national security. They are most often used against the defenseless.

Ultimately, it is a moral issue, as has been so eloquently stated by South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu. He has spoken about the 20 million landmines in Africa that have already destroyed so many innocent lives:

Antipersonnel landmines are not just a crime perpetrated against people, they are a sin. Why has the world been so silent about

these obscenities? It is because most of the victims of landmines are neither heard nor seen.

Mr President, I want to also speak briefly about another issue that will be debated in Vienna, blinding laser weapons.

In recent years, military forces have come to rely on lasers for range finding, target designation and other modern technology. These technologies have helped to increase the accuracy and effectiveness of U.S. weapons, and are widely accepted as legitimate uses in warfare. However, as the technology has advanced, various governments have begun to move from these nonweapon laser systems to the development of tactical laser weapons that are either intended or have the potential to destroy eyesight. Such laser weapons now exist in prototype form, and some are small enough to be mounted on a rifle.

A recent report identified 10 different U.S. laser weapon systems, 5 of which have apparently been fielded in prototype form. The Pentagon has acknowledged that two of the systems were deployed, but not used, in the Gulf war, and that one system was deployed, but not used, in Somalia. Other governments that have been mentioned in the press as developing blinding laser weapons include China, Russia, other former Soviet republics, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Israel. China attempted to market its ZM–87, a portable laser weapon system, at an arms exhibition this spring. Its promotional literature openly states that one of the weapon's main purposes is to injure eyesight.

Alarmed by the obvious potential for widespread abuse by terrorists, rogue states, insurgent groups and common criminals if antipersonnel laser weapons are developed and allowed to proliferate, several years ago the international committee of the Red Cross initiated a campaign against battlefield laser weapons. This led to a Swedish proposal to add a protocol to the convention to prohibit the use of laser weapons for the purpose of causing permanent blindness as a method of warfare. Over 20 governments including many of our closest allies, as well as the European Parliament and the Organization of African Unity, have expressed support for such a protocol.

The possibility of hundreds or thousands of American servicemen and women returning from combat to face the rest of their lives without eyesight is sufficiently horrifying that I sought the Pentagon's opinion on the Swedish proposal. Although the Pentagon concedes that there is no military requirement for weapons that are used to destroy eyesight, I found the Pentagon strongly opposed to the Swedish proposal for several somewhat contradictory reasons:

I was told that a prohibition is unnecessary since there is no plan to develop blinding weapons. At the same time, I was told that they are easy to develop and indeed already exist.

I was told that there is no point in investing in such weapons since they are ineffective in inclement weather and thus unlikely to receive widespread use.

I was told that a prohibition would not prevent their development or use by civilians; that blinding is preferable to death; that a prohibition would be difficult to enforce because of the legitimate uses of lasers in warfare and, even worse, that it would deter legitimate uses; and that negotiation of such a protocol would divert attention from the more immediate and pressing issue of landmines.

These arguments are unpersuasive. The Pentagon maintains that its laser weapons systems are intended not to blind, but to disrupt enemy optical and electro-optical battlefield surveillance systems. The Pentagon has also conceded, however, that in some circumstances the laser weapon performs its antisensor function by damaging the eyesight of the enemy user. A laser weapon beam directed at a simple optic such as a binocular or gunner's sight does not destroy the optical lens, but instead magnifies and shoots back into the human eye, causing damage and probable permanent blindness. The most advanced U.S. laser weapon system, the Laser Countermeasure System [LCMS], which is mounted on an M–16 rifle, reportedly fires a beam powerful enough to destroy a human retina from a distance of 3,000 feet.

The fact that a prohibition would not directly apply to civilians is hardly a reason not to limit their use as a method of warfare, particularly since a prohibition would certainly inhibit their development and use by terrorists and common criminals. Blindness may be preferable to death, but blindness is permanent and weapons used to blind would be used in combination with, not instead of, other deadly weapons.

As for the Pentagon's argument that a prohibition on blinding could deter legitimate uses of lasers, it should not be difficult to distinguish between the use of nonweapon lasers for target designation and range-finding versus tactical laser weapons that can blind. During the Gulf War, there were many thousands of uses of nonweapon lasers by the United States and other nations, and only one or two known instances of eye damage.

In any event, this problem is certainly solvable, and is by no means unique to the laws of war. A prohibition should prohibit blinding as a method of warfare, as well as the development, production, transfer, and use of laser weapons the primary purpose or effect of which is to cause blindness.

Some violations would be difficult or impossible to prove, but that is true with other laws of war violations such as the deliberate targeting of civilians. The burden of proof is on the person alleging the violation.

As a strong proponent of limits on the use of landmines, I certainly do not want negotiations on laser weapons to divert attention from the landmine issue. However, given the brevity of the Swedish proposal, its support among other governments and the unique opportunity presented by the Vienna conference, this is too important an opportunity to miss. I have urged the administration to delay the development or production of any antipersonnel laser system until the issue has been fully considered in Vienna.

Unfortunately, in June the Pentagon made an ill-advised decision to go forward with a limited production of 75 LCMS systems, while deferring a decision on full production of 2,500 units until early 1996. While I am relieved that a decision on full production was delayed, even limited production will complicate the negotiations on a prohibition. The administration should reverse this decision and postpone any further research, development, or procurement of tactical laser weapon systems until after the Vienna conference.

To its credit, the Pentagon recently announced that it has revised its policy on lasers, to prohibit the use of lasers specifically designed to cause permanent blindness. This is an important step, but it is not enough to prohibit only lasers designed to be used against personnel, since virtually any laser can be used to destroy eyesight if used for that purpose.

It is not too late to act to prevent the widespread proliferation of these weapons. Like exploding bullets and other weapons that have been banned as excessively cruel, the administration should actively support an international prohibition on blinding as a method of warfare. U.S. leadership, even at this late date, would virtually assure agreement.

Mr. President, again, the Vienna conference is a unique opportunity. On both landmines and laser weapons, U.S. leadership is urgently needed and vital to save lives and prevent the proliferation of these inhumane weapons.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS APPROPRIATIONS AMENDMENTS VOTES

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I want to take a few moments to explain several of my votes concerning H.R. 1868, the Foreign Operations appropriation bill. I voted in favor of final passage of the bill because it would meet U.S. foreign relations and national security goals, while cutting spending in those areas that do not directly support the U.S. national security strategy.

Many of the amendments offered to the bill concerned the question of responsibility the United States has in economically or militarily supporting other countries. I ran for this body on a platform fiscal conservatism and directing our foreign assistance programs towards those areas in which the United States has a direct political, economic, or national security interest. Although many arguments were raised as to what effect U.S. aid would